



Alternatives for At-Risk Youth in the Casamance

**Financed by USAID
685-A-00-03-00103-00**

FINAL REPORT

Submitted by World Education

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1. INTRODUCTION

World Education implemented the program “Alternatives for At-Risk Youth in the Casamance,” financed by USAID, Cooperative Agreement # 685-A-00-03-00103-00, from August 1, 2003 through January 31, 2005. The program is part of the Casamance Special Objective established by USAID to provide support to the Casamance which has endured more than two decades of armed conflict.

“Alternatives for At-Risk Youth in the Casamance” aimed to contribute to the Casamance Special Objective whose goal is to improve the economic and social conditions of the southern region of the country. Because of this, the youth program focused on a number of specific objectives including increasing leadership among youth, building their capacity and improving the structure of their organizations.

To implement the program under ideal conditions, World Education established partnerships with various actors concerned with youth-related issues. World Education was also careful to involve all layers of communities who were, in effect, beneficiaries even though the program targeted youth. This approach made the beneficiaries responsible for change and favored their organizational development, the strengthening of their capacity and synergy with the maximum possible actors.

The final report will highlight the principal aspects of the program, specifically addressing the following:

- The environment in which the program was implemented
- The goals and objectives and the strategy for program execution
- The results and impact of the activities
- The lessons learned
- The overall importance of the program on the development of youth and its indisputable pertinence to the context of the Casamance
- In the annexes, we will share letters that show the appreciation of actors and beneficiaries of the program

This report is based on several evaluations that were conducted during throughout the life of the program. It also includes different observations and perspectives from the points of view of the program’s actors and beneficiaries as well as analyses from members of the World Education team, our partners and USAID who regularly visited the program. The various sources provide a comprehensive report and recapitulation of strategies, activities, lessons learned, results and impact of the program.

2. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The conflict in the Casamance lasted more than 20 years. In the beginning, it was confined to the region of Ziguinchor with intermittent intensity throughout the departments of Ziguinchor, Oussouye and Bignona. The conflict then spread to the Kolda region, notably the departments of Sedhiou and Kolda. The department of Vélingora, which was touched by the conflict, was certainly the least affected among the others in the two regions. The consequences of the war are felt throughout the region of the Casamance. The deadly combat between the rebels and the Senegalese army, the bloody ambushes and the violent actions on

the roads became regular occurrences and brought the southern region into a state of total insecurity. The results of these events were massive movements of populations, abandoned villages, closed schools, the destruction of health centers and houses, looting, murders, robberies, rape, and the stripping of rice fields and fruit orchards. Tension remained among the population in the villages and this situation compromised all chances for development in the Casamance.

Among all levels of the population that suffered from the war, youth were certainly the most affected. The adults engaged youth as resistance fighters to fight in the bush and they were the ones who joined the army to face the rebels and the ones who suffered from the lack of activity in the villages. Facing this situation, the majority of youth were not able to resist these dangers and banditry and loitering were precipitated by increased drug use, prostitution, theft, rape and muggings.

Fortunately, for the past few years, the state and the civil society have taken the initiative to find lasting peace in the Casamance. For the past several years, World Education and other NGOs financed by USAID were involved in this dynamic search for peace which lead to a temporary improvement that will push the country towards a lasting peace. This peace certainly restored hope among the Casamancais.

If we are living at the end of an era of war and its consequential social, cultural and economic disorganization, we are therefore entering into another era that will be less trying but very difficult because of the complex questions that must be answered. This era will be one of social, cultural and economic reconstruction in a bruised region.

This era will attempt to restore the social structures, the socio-educational infrastructures and reorganize the revival of the region's economy. It is only at the beginning of this era of reconstruction that USAID launched a program for the Casamance youth, a key to resolving the complex questions surrounding this post-war era.

It is almost impossible to adequately reconstruct the Casmanace without mobilizing the most important layer of the community: youth. Consequently, it became imperative to reorganize and strengthen youth to prepare them to face the huge challenges of reconstruction. The youth program therefore, came at the right moment. However, conscious of the complexity of a post conflict program for youth, USAID decided to first fund a short term program through which one could learn the essential lessons for implementing a long term program in the future.

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Goal

The program is part of the Casamance Special Objective that USAID established to support the Casamance. The program aims to contribute to the goals of the Casamance Special Objective by targeting youth, specifically to improve the existing conditions and the social role of youth in the Casamance.

B. Objectives

To achieve its goal, the program focused on a number of objectives:

- Increase the leadership of youth to enable their involvement in the community
- Increase the involvement of youth in community decision making
- Train and educate youth to help them positively change their lifestyles and their behavior related to challenges such as HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, drugs and conflicts
- Train and organize youth to allow them to play an active role in consolidating peace in the Casamance
- Strengthen the capacity of youth associations to allow them to implement development projects

4. ZONES OF INTERVENTION

The program was implemented in the region of Kolda, specifically in the departments of Kolda and Sédhiou. The associations chosen are along the southern route of Senegal including Médine El Hadj from Diattacounda, covering three districts: Dioulacolon, Tanaff and Diattacounda. The program also reached two principle communes in Kolda and Sédhiou.

We concentrated our efforts in the zones that are the front line of the rebellion. Approximately 95 percent of the activities were implemented in villages on the border which all experience frequent acts of violence and attacks. We also intervened in several urban centers to diversify the intervention zones and to learn as much as possible about the effects of such changes in different environments.

5. PROGRAM LENGTH AND ACTIVITIES

The program was carried out from August 2003 through January 2005 as stipulated in our agreement with USAID. We used part of this period to execute important activities such as recruitment and procuring equipment before launching activities in the field. Thus the duration of work in the field was decreased because of these administrative activities.

The limited duration of the project was taken into account by the actors who paid particular attention to the length of each step in the program to avoid delays in program execution. This also mobilized them to achieve the maximum results within their deadlines by sequencing and overlapping activities such as training, subgrants, monitoring and field visits.

The limited time also meant that there was a short period to do certain important activities that usually require a lot of time. As a result, we had to cut back on the time allowed for program preparation, evaluation, studies, diagnostics, training and the monitoring of subgrants.

It is important to note that while the time constraint put some pressure on World Education, its partner OFAD and the beneficiary associations, it was not a limiting factor in the execution of program activities. All of the activities such as training, restitutions and project management were given meticulous attention.

The World Education team also resolved the difficult problem that faces all pilot projects which is how to implement the maximum number of activities in a relatively short period of time while uncovering lessons learned for future programs.

6. BUDGET EXECUTION

The funding for this program, \$259,259, made available by USAID, allowed World Education to conduct this program within the deadlines of the agreement. All of the activities in the agreement were successfully completed.

The funds were given to World Education in one obligation after World Education provided the workplan for the length of the program. It is therefore important to specify that the decreased value of the dollar throughout the program limited the World Education's ability to finance certain activities. The value of the dollar changed from 685 to 485 CFA and the program did not receive additional funding to compensate for this loss.

The funding was given without delay. Throughout the program, the CTO and Contracting Officer Bernadette Daluz gave impeccable support to World Education's Director of Finance and Administration.

The program funds were managed by Alyssa Karp, Director of Finance and Administration, under the supervision of the Country Director, Abdou Sarr. The finance director of World Education's Africa Division, based at World Education's headquarters in Boston also closely monitored the program's finances and helped assure that World Education executed the budget according to USAID regulations. The financial reports, regularly submitted on time, kept USAID abreast of the program's evolution particular related to program expenditures.

At the end of the project period, World Education closed out the program following a plan developed by World Education and shared with USAID. To complete this final report, the financial managers at World Education's headquarters in Boston will provide USAID with a more a more exhaustive report concerning the financial management of the program to USAID.

7. MATERIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

World Education made the necessary human and material resources available to ensure the success of the program. To implement the best program possible, World Education mobilized its Ziguinchor-based team and set up another office in Kolda for a coordinator that was recruited to supervise the program.

In line with its principles, World Education opted to not be totally operational in the field. Instead, we chose to keep a small team and leave our partner responsible for conducting program operations with the beneficiary associations. Had we not used this approach, the program would have required an entirely different team. The youth program started at the end of "Peace and Prosperity in the Casamance" and all staff from this program were involved in the youth program as well.

The World Education team that executed the youth program was composed of the following:

- Director responsible for orientations and program supervision
- Administration and finance manager responsible for the budget
- Administrative assistant responsible for secretarial tasks and support to administrative and financial operations
- Program coordinator responsible for training and monitoring activities
- Driver

Every member of the team did their job satisfactorily. Their determination and their capacity were key to the success of the program.

The team was provided the necessary tools and equipment, office and logistical means necessary to be completely operational. The office in Kolda was equipped to function in great condition.

8. OFAD NAFOORE – LOCAL NGO PARTNER

To execute the program, World Education chose to work with OFAD NAFOORE, a local partner. We decided to partner with OFAD because its familiarity with the Kolda region where it began its work more than ten years ago. OFAD also partnered with World Education on a previous program which gave it a number of qualifications but the organization lacked some skills pertinent to the youth program. As a result, OFAD put together a training team that was composed of a supervisor and three trainers who worked full time on the program and were supported by other OFAD staff when needed.

World Education followed a detailed capacity building plan for OFAD to assure the appropriate implementation of program activities with the beneficiary associations.

9. YOUTH, CULTURAL AND SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS

The youth program's principle partners were, of course, youth. However, we worked with youth that were grouped in grassroots structures, even those that were not well organized, in order to reach as many youth as possible.

Among the youth structures, we chose the Sports and Cultural Associations (ASC) because they are very representative and involved in the target zone, the rural communities and the neighborhoods in the urban areas.

This decision was made based on a number of criteria. We also were able to reach both young men and woman equally in the different rural and urban areas.

Our agreement with USAID required World Education to reach ten youth associations in ten different zones. This objective was entirely achieved. The program actually reached more than its target because the villages where many of the ASCs were located attracted people from nearby villages as well. It is because of this that we were able to reach as many as 50 villages of which 12 are situated in Guinea-Bissau.

10. SELECTION AND SET UP OF THE YOUTH ASSOCIATIONS

The youth program is a pilot program that aims to show lessons learned for future programs brought to scale. To do this, we selected a vast array of associations in order to diversify the lessons learned. The selection is based on well defined criteria. The selection process is carried out with dozens of associations in the different ASC in the departments of Kolda and Sédhiou.

a. Selection criteria for the beneficiary associations

In order to partner with the most appropriate ASCs for this program, we defined selection criteria. The following are criteria used to select associations in each area:

- Only one association can be a beneficiary in each locale
- The association is located in the capital of a rural community
- The association is located near a weekly market
- The association represents the community
- The level of association's organizational structure
- The reach of the association
- The degree of the association's concentration: village, neighborhood, groups of villages
- The maturity of the association
- The association's potential influence
- The association's location – rural or urban

b. Associations chosen for the program

The program team rigorously applied the ten selection criteria in order to chose the associations. Ten associations fit the greatest number of criteria. The selection team was not only consider the criteria. In fact, it considered certain data that made the selection more appropriate as it is shown in the comments on the table below.

Table of Criteria and Associations

Associations Criteria	BOUNA Kolda	ADEME <i>Médine ElHadji</i>	SILAMAKA Saré Yoba	MUSIDAL Niagha	MORICOUNDA Tanaff	ARS Simbandi	COUBAMBOU Yarang	ACSAS Samine	JCAD Diattacounda	WOULABA Sédhiou
1	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
2		yes		yes	yes	yes		yes	yes	
3			yes				yes			
4	yes		yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
5	yes				yes	yes		yes	yes	
6	yes		yes	yes	yes	yes		yes	yes	yes
7	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
8	old	new	old	old	old	old	old	old	old	new
9	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
10	urban	rural	rural	rural	rural	rural	rural	rural	rural	urban

Criteria:

1. One association per locale
2. The association is situated in the capital of a rural community
3. The association is situated near a weekly market
4. It is a representative associations
5. The association's level organization
6. The size of the association
7. The reach of the association (village, neighborhood, group of villages)
8. The association's age (new or old)
9. The association's influence
10. The association is situated in a rural or urban area

Some comments on the selection of associations

Médine El Hadji is a special case. The team selected it because it is in a village where the youth live in an intergenerational conflict. The youth undergo significant pressure from the religious leaders are encouraging them to play their role in the community.

Woulaba Sédhiou is a particular case as well because it has a cultural troupe with more than 20 members. Created in 2000, it is, in addition to ADEME de Médine El Hadji, the youngest association among the program beneficiaries. For Yarang (Coubambou) and Saré Yoba Diéga (Silamaka), the determining factor was the existence of the weekly market on the border. Their relations with Guinea-Bissau were difficult throughout the crisis.

c. Geographic location of the associations

The selection criteria used by the program team allowed us to choose ten associations in different geographic locations. They are located in the following areas:

Department of Kolda: 3 Associations

❖ *Commune of Kolda*

- **Association Sportive et Culutelle Bouna**, Bouna Kane neighborhood

❖ *District of Dioulacolon*

- **Association pour le Développement de Médina El Hadji**, Dioulacolon district
- **Association Sportive et Culturelle Silamaka**, Saré Yoba Diéga

Department of Sédhiou: 7 Associations

❖ *Commune of Sedhiou*

- **Association Culturelle et Artistique Ndamanso Woulaba**, Mansacounda district

❖ *District of Tanaff*

- **Association Sportive Culturelle Moricounda**, Moricounda neighborhood
- **Association Sportive et Culturelle Musidal de Niagha**, community of Niagha
- **Associatioin pour la Rénovation de Simbandi Brassou**, community of Simbandi Brassou

❖ *District of Diattacounda*

- **Association Culturelle Sportive et Artisque de Samine; Association Sportive et Culturelle Coubambou de Yarang**, community of Samine
- **Jeuness Culturelle et Artistique de Diattacounda**, community of Diattacounda

This geographic division allowed the program to reach a number of different zones. The area of intervention is divided into two communes: Kolda and Sédhiou and six rural communities: Tankanto Escale, Médina El Hadji, Niagha, Tanaff, Simbandi Brassou and Samine Escale.

11. DIAGNOSTIC STUDY ON THE BENEFICIARY ASSOCIATIONS

To have sufficient knowledge of the beneficiary associations before starting the activities, the program team conducted a baseline study of all of the associations. Specifically, the study was designed to:

- Become familiar with the associations' structure, membership and activities
- Become familiar with the associations' strengths and weaknesses
- Identify and evaluate the needs of the associations
- Study of solutions

The study revealed the following results:

11.1 General characteristics of the associations

The ten youth associations are located in neighborhoods or villages that were involved in conflict in one way or another. All of the villages at one time were victims of looting, crime and mass exodus of their populations. The associations were able to maintain their youth membership, at least in Moricounda de Tanaff.

In town, the locations of the neighborhoods of Bouna in Kolda and Mansacounda in Sédhiou were such that they were able to accept the people who abandoned their villages due to conflict. The ASC Bouna in Kolda were the most representative in their neighborhoods as well as Woulaba and Sédhiou in Mansacounda because of the relevance of their cultural activities and their engagement in issues such as peace and HIV/AIDS.

11.2 Associations' strengths

The baseline study showed a number of strengths that the program tried to consolidate, develop and support to achieve certain activities:

- The associations have a strong capacity in mobilizing their members
- Women are active in 70% of the associations and are somewhat involved in decision making
- 90% of the associations have more than 100 active members
- All of the associations have at least two structures: the board and the general assembly
- The associations' members are involved in political, economic and social life of the village or neighborhood
- Almost all of the associations have elected members of society such as rural, municipal or regional advisors
- The associations have several members that are teachers
- The associations are good at mobilizing for sports, cultural and recreational activities

11.3 Associations' weaknesses

The study equally uncovered a number of weaknesses and constraints that the program tried to resolve through a series of capacity building activities in order to make the associations strong enough to carry out their roles in the community.

- Lack of information and communication with members
- More than half of the associations did not have internal policies and written statutes
- More than 80% of the associations did not keep accounting records or bank accounts
- Insecurity in the villages
- Stress among youth in the villages
- Lack of training in developing and managing projects
- The existence of drugs, sex and theft
- Absences after winter
- Lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS
- Temptation to leave the village
- Early sexual activity (a lot of young mothers)
- Little contraceptive use
- Total absence of financial partners
- Lack of training for associations
- Lack of income generating activities

- Weak financial resources
- Weak capacity to finance projects

11.4 Proposed Solutions

The restitution following the diagnostic study provided an opportunity to talk with the communities and discuss certain solutions that were envisioned by the program in order to address certain insufficiencies that limited active participation among youth in the community management.

- Build the capacity of the leaders and members
- Associations obtain official recognition
- Train members on developing and managing projects
- Train members on HIV/AIDS and other illnesses
- Train members on stress management
- Train members on conflict prevention and management
- Finance micro-projects for the associations

12. BACKGROUND ON THE TEN ASSOCIATIONS

The diagnostic study allowed us to specifically address the state of each association at the start of the program. This study was a program goal to provide a reference to which one could measure the evolution of the associations during the program and do a comparative analysis of the ASCs at the end of the program. Because there is always a concern for having a good reference base on which to make comparisons, we chose a control ASC which would not receive funds. We provide the state of each of the ten associations below.

12.1 Association Culturelle Sportive et Artistique de Samine

The Association Culturelle Sportive et Artistique de Samine (ACSAS) was founded on December 13, 1991 by a group of six members. The principle reasons for its creation are that the members wanted to form a group, without any religious, ethnic or political affiliations, for the village youth to organize and support solidarity, to contribute to Samine's awareness of youth issues through information, training and communication.

Concerning operations, ACSAS has an administrative board, a management committee, a strategic committee, an assembly general, and a review board for the proposals that come from the committee director and the executive board. Its governing principles are not written however, they are accepted by all of the members based on the respect of their engagement.

ACSAS's principle activities are sports (essentially soccer), awareness raising about illnesses and the peace process, organizing discussions on issues facing the community. Since its creation, ACSAS has held an annual soccer tournament in the community (which it won in 1997 and 2003) in August and September, organized a soccer tournament of the commandant sector G2 and four other villages, and organized a forum on peace consolidation and development in the Casamance in 2002.

12.2 Association pour la Rénovation de Simbandi Brassau

The Association pour la Rénovation de Simbandi Brassau (ARS) was created on September 8, 1988 by a group of six youth in order to address the conflicts that exists between different ASC and to promote socio-economic development in the village. It brought together all of the youth in the village and the seven different ASCs that were isolated in different neighborhoods. ARS is, by definition, the federated structure in the village. An older member of the youth, Mamdou Fofana, presides over the association.

After clarifying its objectives, the idea of the association was brought to the adults in the village for authorization. An assembly general of all of the youth was put in place in order to create the coordination structure for the development activities. Thus ARS was born.

ARS operates with two groups: the board, composed of five members and divided into five commissions (health, education, youth, fundraising, and development) and a general assembly that brings together all of the members. The board meets once a month and is composed of representatives from seven sports and cultural associations in the village. The general assembly meets once a year. Commission meetings are held when needed. This form of organization and operation allows the periodic gathering of the village in order to foresee village management needs and questions in Simbandi Brassau.

For the association's financial management, the treasurer is responsible for collecting all receipts and paying vendors. The costs equal the association's income for the most part. Each member buys a membership card for 300CFA, valid for four years. The association also organizes dances and gatherings to raise money. The funds are kept in an account at the Mutuelle in the village.

Each year, ARS organizes a village clean-up effort after the rainy season and football tournaments. It makes a team of the best soccer players among all of the ASCs and this team has won three district cups and seven community cups.

The association's involvement in conflict management, which is a considerable part of ARS's activities, is mostly done through participation at different meetings organized by NGOs who are trying to secure a lasting peace in the region.

ARS also believes that it is important to support the dialogue of the MFDC and the gouvernement, organize the return of displaced people, and hold cultural days to promote acceptance and tolerance. ARS thinks that it must also drive the awareness raising activities for peace and development and to eliminate insecurity for real peace consolidation. The association is ready to engage in awareness raising campaigns and organize conferences on the crisis when needed.

12.3 Association Sportive et Culturelle Coubamabou de Yarang

The ASC in Coubambou was created in 1984 by a group of six members, of which the village chief is the president, following a conflict between the two ethnic groups, the Balantes and the Mandingues, in the village. The two youth groups began to develop separate behavior and each wanted to be alone in the village.

They quickly started to have problems as no one was able to achieve their objectives. The neighborhood quarrels began and there was soon all kind of gossip circulating in Yarang. Conscious that this dangerous situation threatened the future of the village, the six founding

members from Coubambou from different ethnicities in the village, established the association, convinced that the solution to the problem was to put in place a federated association that is not based on ethnicity, rather the will of the community. With respect to this resolution, Coubambou's objectives were to involve all youth in the socio-economic development of the village.

The association has a board, a management committee and an assembly general. The mandates are voted on and can be reinstated. Sanctions are given to members that do not abide by the association's bylaws that govern the association and are essentially based on local values and customs.

The village chief, who has a lot of credibility among all parts of the population, presides over the association. He actively participates in the village activities and is highly involved in cross-border mediation to promote security between Yarang and the villages in Guinea Bissau. He also has several Guinean children staying at his house. With their parents' consent, he hosts the children who are enrolled in school in Yarang to promote interaction between Yarang and its neighbors.

The ASC's income generating activities include occasional gatherings such as dances, theater and football game organized by the village, annual membership fees, storing trucks during market days, village clean-ups, and a collective field in the village.

Coubambou has two classrooms at the village school as well as a space for youth gatherings. With relation to the crisis in the Casamance, the ASC participated in the construction of a bunker for the army and bought cooking supplies for the soldiers.

Concerning the crisis in the Casamance, the ASC participated in the construction of a bunker for the army in the village and the purchase of cooking tools for the army.

12.4 Association Sportive et Culture Moricounda de Tanaff

The ASC Moricounda de Tanaff was created in 1997 by a group of eight members after a discussion about the lack of organizations in the neighborhood, a principle factor in the drop-out rate.

The founders' goal was to establish a group that would allow youth to express themselves and contribute toward the development of the neighborhood.

The ASC operates with a board, a management committee and an assembly general that meet once a year. All members must pay a membership fee to be active. The president coordinates the association's activities and a secretary and treasurer are responsible for administrative and financial affairs.

The ASC's income generating activities include selling wood, membership fees, dances and theater. The ASC also receives contributions from certain members.

Moricounda's principle activities are football, cleaning the neighborhood, reforestation and recreational activities such as dances and theater.

In terms of completed projects, the ASC actively participated in the construction of the neighborhood's mosque. It is also very active during regular clean-up efforts in the village. A tradition of solidarity among the members has already come alive.

12.5 Associations Sportive et Culturelle Silamaka de Saré Yoba Diéga

The Association Silamaka de Saré Yoba Diéga was created in 1985 by a group of five members (Thierno Seydou Diallo, Oumar Kandé, Mamadou Mané, Boubacar Ba – the president, and Salif Seydi) after realizing that the village was lacking a youth association. Their observations stated the following challenges: a lack of supporting structures for youth, the inexistence of an advisory group, high drop-out rates, crime at the weekly market, the village's slow rate of development in relation to other villages in the area, the number of failed exams in the schools, the difficulty to access health care despite the existence of a health center. To share these difficulties with the village, a general assembly was organized, the ASC Silamaka was created and their objectives were defined.

Their goal was to organize youth to decrease the drop-out rate and mass exodus from the towns of Kolda, Ziguinchor, Bissau and Dakar, but also to mobilize the community during vacations and take responsibility for cleaning the village after winter and contribute to the village's socio-economic development.

The association is managed by a board, a management committee and a general assembly which is sovereign and brings together all of the members of Silamaka once a year. The two other bodies assure the correct execution of activities and make decisions. The board meets once a month as called by the president and the management committee meets at least every six months.

The association has a 500CFA joining fee and a monthly 200CFA membership fee which are its principle sources of income. The other funds come from the association's theater group, dances, bazaars and the community garden.

The association's principle activities are the following: the community corn field, vegetable gardens, village clean-up efforts, soccer games and theater. Vacation classes are also organized every year for the students in the village. Each year, the ASC participates in a soccer tournament at the district level.

12.6 Association pour le Développement de Médine El Hadji

The Association pour le Développement de Médina El Hadji was created following a youth meeting that was organized to discuss the future of the village.

ADEME's goal is to fight poverty, reduce the illiteracy rate – especially among women and the unemployed, and the village's isolation. Concerning the last goal, it should be mentioned that the route to the village, which is located 18km from Kolda of which 10km is a small path, takes an hour to drive to in the winter.

Among the initiators were the sons of the village chief, the imam and the leaders of the local football team. It has both a board and a general assembly. The statutes and the bylaws are still being determined. The only activity in which the youth have been involved over the past few years is football.

The youth decided to take action to break their dependence to the marabou and traditional constraints and reclaim their rights as citizens. The youth wanted to stop being managed in order to be informed, consulted and responsible for everything concerning the village. The youth in Médina do not live easily with the constraints in their village – many of which are religious. Médina is known for its annual religious gathering: Ziarra.

12.7 Association Sportive et Culturelle Bouna (Kolda)

The ASC Bouna de Kolda was created in 1987 following the transformation of the old association, Jeunesse Sportive et Culturelle de Bouna (JSCB). The new association was put in place by a group consisting of Mamadou Sy, the neighborhood representative, Seyniba Diassy, Moussa Sy, Lamine Sylla, Ibou Camara and Abdoulaye, the active members to date.

Their objective was to create an association that would allow the youth in the neighborhood to express themselves and implement sporting events and sociocultural activities and initiatives to decrease unemployment and juvenile delinquency in the village.

The idea to branch out came up at a meeting of the general assembly, of which there are one hundred active members. The management committee and the executive board were put in place and the three bodies still exist and are operational.

The ASC is managed by a board that submits its objectives to the management committee and to the general assembly. The principle reason for this process is to ensure transparency and democratic management. The association makes its internal governing documents and statutes available.

The majority of the ASC's funds come from its members. The ASC also periodically organizes dances as fundraisers.

The ASC's principle activities are soccer, occasional village clean-up efforts and cultural events. Specifically, in the past three years, the ASC organized an annual soccer tournament for the three ASCs in the neighborhood, participated a regional soccer tournament and cleaned the streets after winter.

12.8 Jeunesse Culturelle et Artistique de Diattacounda

In 1979, a group of nine youth organized themselves to unify the village and create an association that would address the village's socioeconomic development. Their objective was to fully involve youth in the village's economic, cultural and social development.

At first, the activities were primarily sports: traditional wrestling and soccer. They also did activities such as theater and awareness raising activities before they were officially recognized.

JCAD has a board, a management committee and a general assembly. The association's members are village youth of least 18 years old and all ethnicities and religions are welcome. Members pay 500CFA to join and 500CFA every year.

This structure allows the association to participate in civic training, professional development for youth, encourage and coordinate the members' involvement in community development activities and to promote partnerships for village development.

JCAD's income generating activities are essentially dances and theater performances. The association also organizes classes during school vacations and village clean-ups, and is actively involved in raising awareness about illnesses such as malaria and HIV/AIDS.

JCAD has built three classrooms at an elementary school in the village, bought gas, supplies for an elementary school, medication for the health center and contributed to construction at the village mosque.

12.9 Association Sportive et Culturelle Musidal de Niagha

The Association Sportive et Culturelle Musidal de Niagha was created on July 21, 1987 and brings together youth of all religions and race. It is also apolitical and nonreligious. Its objectives are to strengthen solidarity among youth and contribute to socioeconomic activities in Niagha.

The association has statutes and internal governance documents, a board, a general assembly and a management committee. The members are elected and their terms are limited. The management bodies (the board, the management committee and the general assembly) meet regularly. The board is composed of youth, a management committee made up of village leaders and the general assembly brings together different members of the community.

To be a member, one must be from the village, be at least 18 years of age and buy a membership for 500CFA. There is an action plan to renew the association every year through the general assembly.

The association raises money through its members' contributions and fees. The association does not have a bank account, the treasurer manages the association's financial activity in a notebook. At the end of the year, the treasurer presents a financial report with justifications to the general assembly.

The association's activities are centered around raising awareness about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections and malaria, cleaning up the village, dances and soccer games during school vacations. Regarding this last point, the association was a finalist from 1991 to 2003 in the rural community.

The association also addresses conflict. To manage conflict, the association has been collaborating with other associations in the district and in Guinea-Bissau since it partnered with World Education at the beginning of the youth project. In September, 2003, the association brought together eight other associations from the district to raise awareness among community members about issues related to peace, mines and reconstruction. The association collaborates with the military on conflict management by setting up nightly patrols in the communities and identifying suspect travelers in the village.

12.10 Association Culturelle et Artistique Ndamanso Woulaba de Sédhiou

Ndamansa (a creature of God, in Mandingue), Woulaaba (the great forest or the sacred forest) in the Mansacounda de Sédhiou neighborhood is an artistic and cultural association composed of 19 members of which seven are young girls. It is both an association and an acting group – all of its members are artists and always acting out scenes.

The association was created by this group in 1999 to promote artistic and cultural development in Sédhiou and to contribute to revitalizing traditions through theater and dance.

The association's importance in the neighborhood can be recognized by its celebrity. It conducts awareness raising sessions on HIV/AIDS, the dangers of drug use and juvenile delinquency that result in early sexual activity and a high dropout rate in the community. This dropout rate can be seen even among the members of the group – none of whom reached secondary school.

Woulaaba is managed by a young man with a strong personality and who also happens to be the captain of the soccer team. Bamody Diémé, known as Kaou, is one of the most popular youth in Sédhiou and manages the group with a firm hand. This young man's seriousness, availability and initiative, are well respected by others in the community and his friends of which he is among the youngest. Woulaaba is managed by a board.

The group performs in Mandingue, French and Wolof. The pieces are composed by members of the group and the girls in the group have an especially important role. Despite its lack of equipment, the group has a strong capacity to mobilize the population of Sédhiou.

12. SYNERGY WITH OTHER ACTORS

World Education estimated that with OFAD it would be able to handle most aspects of the program. But with regard to the diversity of activities, World Education knew it would be difficult to do alone. It is for this reason that World Education engaged a number of other local organizations such as ASACASE and even international organizations such as UNICEF.

This synergy was not limited to NGOs and international organizations. World Education is committed to establishing partnerships with the local, departmental and regional governments and has worked in collaboration with the prefets and sous prefets as well. These different authorities have given us the support we were hoping for and we have kept in regular contact with them to share information related to the evolution of the program. The prefets received quarterly reports and we always asked the sous prefets to manage and participate in all program events.

World Education also established partnerships with the directors of the decentralized collectives. We strongly believe that the sustainability of the program depends on the participation of these leaders. We also worked with the presidents of rural communities, rural advisors, village chiefs and mayors.

World Education also worked with the technical services of the state, specifically, the Youth Inspector responsible for developing youth policy in the departments of Sédhiou and Kolda. This solid collaboration was aimed at taking advantage of their expertise and to make way for a sustainable future. Our synergy with the inspectors was determined by the program, that is to say that during the program, the youth inspectors in the departments of Kolda and Sédhiou

were given support according to the program's needs. While determining the geographic target areas, conducting the training sessions, choosing the associations and identifying projects, the two state agents made efforts to help in the program. Their availability was the result of several meetings in the field. They participated in all important program missions and almost all training sessions.

On questions related to the associations' training, at the different orientations and especially at the regular training sessions, the inspectors helped the youth in the grassroots movement become recognized in the communities. Their participation also enhanced the training on administration and management. In each department, the inspectors helped us enroll the associations in the Caravane des Vacances Citoyennes at the Ministry of Youth which also helped us achieve impressive results for the youth program in Saré Yoba Diéga and in Diattacounda.

World Education especially insisted on collaborating with the Minister of Youth. We estimate that the program's sustainability will be due in large part to the youth inspectors who, as members of the government, have a lasting presence.

It is certain that because of this synergy with the various actors, we were able to complete certain activities throughout the program, they facilitated the program's operations and will ensure sustainability in the future.

14. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

To achieve the difficult goals of the program that were to increase the leadership of youth and their capacity to play an active role in their reconstruction and consolidation of peace in the Casamance, the program used a diversified strategy to determine the different operations that were necessary. The program used a strategy based on increasing the capacity of youth and creating conditions that would enable us to achieve the best results. Among these strategies are the following:

a. strengthening the capacity of the beneficiary associations

Strengthening the capacity of the associations is fundamental in World Education's intervention strategy. Successful program implementation and sustainability are strongly linked to the acquired skills of the associations.

It is for this reason that a large part of the program focused on strengthening the capacity of the associations. Several workshops were organized throughout the program. The themes of these trainings include: leadership, project management, management and administration of an association, stress management, nonviolent prevention and management of conflicts, human rights, project implementation and the nature of business.

b. micro projects

To use the skills acquired from the various trainings, World Education's strategy included micro projects that were an opportunity for the associations to apply what they learned. The micro projects were also an opportunity for community members to meet with each other and talk about the conflict and find solutions.

The micro projects definitely helped resolve certain practical problems in the program and mobilized youth to resolve problems as well. It also motivated the associations to work with other communities to prevent certain conflicts and to consolidate peace in the program zones.

15. RESULTS AND IMPACT

In this section, we will share the results of the program. We will look at how the program implementation produced an impact in the leadership strengthening of youth in the Casamance. We refer to the program's objectives for this analysis.

1. Results and impact concerning the increase in leadership among youth in community activities

Increasing youth leadership obviously was one of the priorities of the youth program. To achieve this objective, we organized a series of leadership training sessions. The training gave the youth a number of tools that will allow them to look at their behavior and attitudes, improve their leadership in their group and in the village. The trainings produced results in the increase of leadership among youth.

1.1 Leadership training for the youth association officers

One of the biggest objectives of the program was to strengthen the leadership skills of youth to help them more effectively participate in the reconstruction and development of the Casamance. For this reason, we paid close attention to this aspect of the program. We decided to give this training to the officers so that they would be able to use the skills in their management of the association.

In addition, from each of the ten associations, we selected three members of the board of which one member was the association president. Therefore, there were 30 participants at the leadership training workshop. To increase the capacity of OFAD in the area of leadership, we allowed ten members of OFAD's personnel to take part in the training as well.

1.2 Training content

To avoid developing a training that would not correspond to the actual needs of the participants, the trainers asked each of the participants to identify their expectations in relation to leadership training at the start of the training. The different expectations reported helped the trainers to develop sessions that were most pertinent to leadership.

The leadership training that we gave to the associations covered the following topics:

- The definition of leadership
- The definition of a group
- The definition of communication
- The definition of advocacy

The training was focused on these aspects of leadership. The topics related to the 'group' training were: the functions of a group, the components, the goals, group dynamics, internal contradictions, group conflicts, and conflict management. However, a good leader cannot

correctly manage a group without a good grasp of communications techniques. The diverse aspects of communication are therefore included in the training. Groups also encounter moments of crisis and difficulties in its operations and evolution. The leader must be able to help the group overcome the problems and defend its interests. Advocacy techniques make up the final part of the leadership training workshop.

1.3 Pedagogy and training techniques used

Participatory pedagogy was used throughout the workshop. In order to teach the maximum amount of topics to the participants, we systematically used participatory methods during all steps of the training workshop. This training approach allowed all participants to engage in debates and to give their points of view on the various questions raised in the different sessions. Throughout the workshop the participants worked in small groups on real cases addressing: factors that influence life in a group, group dynamics, the importance of interpersonal relationships, etc.

The trainers assured plenty of time for dialogue and discussion to allow the participants to express themselves according to their experiences and how they manage conflicts in their respective groups. A particular emphasis was placed on the definition of leadership, the functions of leaders, leadership styles, communication obstacles, listening and the disintegration of groups.

After three days of training, the trainers put the participants in simulated situations to practice their skills. All of the training steps used role plays during which the participants became the actors and simulated characters. This pedagogical method not only allowed participants to test their skills but it also let them profit from the other participants' observations and critiques.

The leadership training was well done and the trainers' final evaluation, with the aid of a questionnaire, indicated that the workshop's objectives were completely achieved. The participants learned all of the aspects of leadership that the training intended to teach them.

During the opening and closing ceremonies, World Education Director Abdou Sarr insisted on the importance of good leadership in making youth associations in the region more capable of being powerful actors at the frontlines of the battle of reconstruction and development in the Casamance. He also talked about the importance of open communication and sharing among the members of associations, the importance of the knowledge acquired during the training, and encouraged them to use their new skills in the associations' future operations.

The leadership training led to remarkable results. The periodic evaluations conducted by World Education throughout the program showed a net increase in the leadership and conscientiousness among the youth in their activities, their attitudes and their behavior concerning certain obstacles that challenge the healthy functions of their communities.

1.4 The results and impacts of the leadership training

- 1.4.1 The youth completed certain interventions that led to the resolution of longstanding conflicts in Médine El Hadji between the youth and the religious authorities. The youth in Niagha found similar success with the rural advisors.

- 1.4.2 The youth invested themselves in the consolidation of inter-village relations through cultural and recreational gatherings, particularly in the neighboring villages of Médine El Hadji, Saré Yoba Diéga, Tanaff, Yarang and Samine.
- 1.4.3 The youth also launched cross border dialogue with their peers in Guinea Bissau to work together on peace consolidation initiatives such as comparing socio-educational structures, preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS, the dangers of the circulation of arms, and the flight of livestock.
- 1.4.4 The training allowed the youth time for introspection and particular, to take into account that their management practices have been far from participatory. In fact, they all recognized that they have not been using the human resources available in their associations. None of the organizations held regular meetings and did not keep track of their activities. Today, all of the associations hold monthly planning meetings that allow everyone to participate in the management of the association.
- 1.4.5 Under the guidance of their leaders, the associations organize meetings to review activities for which the members are responsible. The associations also systematically hold restitution sessions to share the training they received with the maximum number of members.
- 1.4.6 The youth insisted that the management committees organize weekly meetings with the members of the board to talk about finances and share the challenges faced by the association. The ASCs, who in Senegal are often a group of youth who manage in an autocratic fashion, became more transparent because of these simple informational meetings.
- 1.4.7 Communication within the associations also notably improved and help the ASCs avoid tension and internal divisions that plagued them in the past. All of the ASCs' boards are recognized through informational meetings and regular general assembly meetings and previous problems have been nearly eliminated. The members that are on different committees are informed and involved in decisions which has vastly decreased conflicts.
- 1.4.8 The leadership training gave the youth a new consciousness for the importance and the necessity for strategic alliances and implementing activities that one association cannot complete by itself. This is why the ASC presidents decided to create a federation of 10 partner associations to assure proper monitoring and supervision and to increase the chances for success on activities and to solve problems together.
- 1.4.9 The federation is far from being something that was created only in the excitement of the workshop. The youth developed action plans which is how the federation was born. The federation has rotating monthly meetings to discuss problems and different perspectives among the association members. Since June, the federation has started the process of obtaining legal recognition and had already begun cross border activities.
- 1.4.10 During the leadership training, we worked on the specific case of the village Niagha where a communication deficit created a conflict at the rural advisor. The

small group discussions addressed the ‘Niagha question’, led by Abdou Sarr, and took a closer look at the rural advisor who felt that his function had been blocked by a generational conflict. The solutions were welcomed by the Niagha ASC which, upon return to their village resolved the delicate problem that had lasted for 10 months without an intermediary. This conflict resolution in Niagha was certainly the most important impact of the leadership training.

2. Results and impact of youth awareness of social issues such as HIV/AIDS, STIs, drugs and conflict
 - a. Information and awareness raising for youth on the problems associated with HIV/AIDS

To inform and prepare the youth to change their behavior related to drug use and sexual activity as it relates to HIV/AIDS, the program worked with youth to establish video clubs that would be information and awareness raising centers. The video clubs project various films on different themes and provide an opportunity for youth to inform one another about HIV/AIDS and drug prevention.

In order for the video clubs to implement their HIV/AIDS awareness raising programs, which was a concern for the majority of associations, World Education distributed a set of thematic cassettes to each of the four clubs (Diattacounda, Simbandi-Brassou, Tanaff and Bouna de Kolda). It is important to note that World Education’s synergy with Family Health International and Direction pour l’Education et la Santé helped the program provide useful materials to the targets.

The HIV/AIDS themes covered by the cassettes include information about the epidemic and its consequences on families and its harm to the country’s economy. The films also address prevention methods and risky behavior. The film, “Scenarios from the Sahel” addresses these behavior change issues in an amusing but direct style to mitigate the spread of HIV/AIDS. At the request of the youth, the cassettes were used in the context of videoclubs and were greatly appreciated by the target population. The debates, commentaries, worries and questions that followed the viewings proved that the themes impacted the youth.

Taking into account the interest expressed by youth regarding the HIV/AIDS films, the program continued to assist the associations by helping them obtain additional cassettes. The cassettes which addressed other HIV/AIDS issues helped to further increase the knowledge about the epidemic among the target population.

To help the target population accept the films which talked about sexuality, a topic otherwise taboo, the program placed a particular emphasis on their importance during the ceremony at which the cassettes were given to the associations. The cassettes were therefore well received in the presence of a committee of wise elders. This was also an occasion at which World Education was able to address the effects of HIV/AIDS and the need for people of all ages to participate in the fight. We were very satisfied with the reception of this message on the part of the elders who invited the youth to show the films to everyone in the village. The titles of the cassettes shown by the videoclubs were as follows:

#	Cassette Title	Language
1	Scenarios from the Sahel	French
2	Scenarios from the Sahel	Wolof
3	Scenarios from the Sahel	Pulaar
4	It is time to Take Action	French
5	Living Positively	Diola, French
6	Amah Djah	French
7	How to Use a Condom	Wolof
8	Moytu Mucc	Wolof
9	The Community Approach	Wolof

The videoclubs did more than just awareness raising activities. They also did recreational activities that allowed the youth to watch films during their spare time. The program took measures to oversee these activities to make sure the content of the films were used for the right reasons.

In the aim to project films that would not damage a populations morality, the program and the ASCs agreed to implicate committees of elders. The committees were delegated by the community and were represented by the president of the rural community or a member of the rural advisory committee, an imam from the mosque, two well known people from the village, a representative from the sous-prefet and the president of the ASC. The committee was occasionally asked to review the content of the films and judge their appropriateness based on local customs.

All of the videoclubs had a committee which assured conformity to the association's mission. It is interesting to note that the committees suggested that the youth think about how the films relate to Islam and its tolerances so that elders could also profit from the videoclubs during the month of Ramadan. The youth appreciated this suggestion because it encouraged cohesion in the community around their activities.

- b. Awareness raising for youth about the problems related to drugs and conflicts through community improvement activities, sports and information sessions

The ASCs took advantage of school vacations to organize large gatherings and sporting events, community improvement activities and awareness raising sessions on various subjects about drugs and conflict.

The ASCs mostly focused on awareness raising activities and they took advantage of events such as baptisms, marriages, weekly markets, dances, football games, exchanges between associations to convey their messages. The awareness raising covered themes such as: HIV/AIDS and STIs, malaria, health, drugs, peace and development, and schooling. As planned, the audio equipment helped with these activities.

The videoclubs greatly contributed to the ASC's awareness raising activities. As a result they organized a lot of the projections for the target population in the villages, neighborhoods and at the ASC. The projections were often attended by specialists such as doctors in most cases. At all of the projections, the management committee would address the participants before films on malaria, drugs and HIV/AIDS.

Concerning the community improvement activities, the ASCs mobilized people to clean the streets in the village, and the walls of public buildings such as mosques, clinics, administrative buildings and the police department. In Médine El Hadji, the youth worked on the marabout's field which had not been given care in long time. The community improvement activities increased the credibility of the ASC in their villages and the population greatly appreciated their efforts, especially since they were initiatives that came from youth. In Médine El Hadji, the youth especially showed their commitment to the community. Even now, the village elders, notables and the community at large regard the youth in high esteem.

All of the ASCs organized sporting events and recreational activities in fact, all of the ASCs had football teams that were represented at local tournaments. These sporting events and cultural activities are important affairs that help the populations reestablish cohesion in the community and are often followed by dances. All of these events were made possible by the ASC which used them to inform youth about drugs and problems related to the conflict.

3. Results and impact of training for youth to prepare youth to play an active role in the consolidation of peace in the Casamance

In addition to training sessions that helped youth protect themselves from illnesses and built their capacity to manage and sustain their projects, the program addressed issues related to the trauma caused by the war, peace consolidation and conflict prevention. To do this, the program gave a series of trainings to the ASCs on themes such as human rights, stress and trauma management, conflict prevention and nonviolent conflict management.

a. Human rights training

The program provided human rights training for all of the ASCs. The objective of the training was to raise the awareness of the target population on issues related to human rights and the necessity to take into account others' rights in order to create a social environment that is conducive to peace building. The training showed youth that conflicts do not respect the rights of individuals or communities. The principle themes were:

- Promoting and protecting human rights
- Spreading certain fundamental rights
- Rights for minorities and other vulnerable groups
- The right to live
- Tolerance
- Democratic management of structures and socio-political groups
- Citizenship and development

b. Stress management training

Like the human rights training, the program provided stress management training for all of the beneficiary associations. The goal of the trainings was to build the capacity of youth in stress management. The trainings covered the following points:

- The definition, the causes, the different phases, signs and evolution of stress caused by a particular incident or trauma
- The reactions and difficulties of post-traumatic stress

- Child and adult trauma
- The aptitudes needed to establish a confidential relationship with someone who has been traumatized
- Group and individual debriefing
- Psychological education and care

c. Non-violent conflict prevention and management

This training module was also given to all of the ASCs. The goal was to give communities the necessary knowledge to prevent and manage conflicts. The training covered the following themes:

- Different points of view
- The Major/Minor model in differences in points of view
- The three mechanisms of violence: the build-up, the chain and the internalization
- The visible and invisible phases of each mechanism
- The verbal and nonverbal aspects of the mechanisms
- The notion of positive, negative and destructive arguments in the Major/Minor model
- The equivalence in supporting points of view

Each of these aspects addressed in the different sessions were accompanied by practical applications through interesting exercises and simulations that took the participants through the process of resolution. The process included the following steps:

- researching the reasons for both sides' arguments
- communication between the two parties
- the break – letting each side consider the other's point of view
- the solution – responding to all of the reasons for argument

d. Results and impacts of the peace consolidation training

The program gave three types of training to youth providing them with the necessary tools to help them live in traumatic situations caused by conflict, consolidate peace and prevent conflicts. The training had the following results:

- ❖ In a situation where fundamental rights are ignored, the associations addressed women's rights, children's rights, minorities' rights, and religious rights. The evaluations at the end of the training showed that all of the associations mastered the different principles of fundamental rights.
- ❖ The training also helped the associations understand the associations' members' rights to information and the responsibilities of the officers to inform their members in return.
- ❖ The training also showed the associations that conflicts are always caused by a lack of respect of individuals' or groups' rights and the return of peace depends on reestablishing this respect.
- ❖ It is evidently difficult to measure the impact of rights' training in such a short period of time, but the evaluations showed that all of the participants obtained the necessary

knowledge concerning fundamental rights and are conscious of the importance of respect and consideration to preserve peace in communities and groups.

- ❖ All of the ten associations were trained in stress management techniques. The evaluations at the end of the workshops showed that 95% of the participants mastered the different phases, the signs and evolution of stress caused by an incident or trauma. The 95% of participants could also identify the reactions and difficulties caused by post-traumatic stress, they know how to establish a confidential relationship with traumatized individuals and organize individual and group debriefings.
- ❖ All of the ten associations participated in the management and conflict prevention training. The evaluations conducted after the training indicated that 94% of the participants acquired knowledge about the following elements of conflicts: the three mechanisms of violence and its evolution, the chain and fueling or internalization, the visible and invisible phases of each mechanism, the verbal and nonverbal elements of the mechanisms and the notions of positive, negative and destructive arguments. The evaluations also showed that the participants had a good comprehension of the steps for conflict resolution.

It is important to underline that the training allowed youth to play an important part in the region's peace consolidation as well as cross border activities. The ASC partners organized activities to promote cross border dialogue with villages in Guinea-Bissau and fostered the reunification of villages on both sides. The principle goal of the cross border activities was to find a durable peace which would allow for the security of goods and individuals along the border.

The goal could have been achieved without the socio-cultural collaboration and frank and sincere communication among the people living along the border. The peace consolidation activities were a large focus of the youth associations and it is therefore difficult to understand how they were previously marginalized in the peace process. It is fortunate, thanks to the leadership and nonviolent conflict prevention and management training, that youth became involved in peace building activities along the border. World Education facilitated gatherings and offered methodological, financial and material support. The cross border activities were the following:

- ACSAS de Samine held cross border meetings in Bégène, a district in Guinea Bissau July 12-13, 2004. For two days, associations from two villages organized different sporting events such as women's soccer games, wrestling, traditional dancing and cultural parties. They also organized reflection workshops on themes such as peace, development and HIV/AIDS. The meetings were covered by media in both Senegal and Guinea Bissau. All of the other ASC partners participated at the meetings organized by ACSAS.
- The ASC Coubambou de Yarang held cross border meetings in September, 2004. The meetings, like those in Samine, included sports and socio-cultural activities. They also included reflection on themes such as children's education – especially for girls, women and children's health, HIV/AIDS and STIs and peace consolidation. All of the other ASC partners participated in the meetings organized by the ASC in Yarang to learn from their experiences and replicate the initiative.

- The ASC Musidal de Niagha held cross border meetings in October, 2004 in Lambang, Guinea Bissau. This gathering received the most media attention mostly because of the high involvement on the part of authorities from the two countries and because there had been a longstanding conflict between the two villages of Lambang and Niagha since 2000 when the rebels pillaged Lambang. Since that event, inhabitants of both villages no longer interacted with one another. The meetings between the two therefore restored peace in the two zones. The ASC organized the gathering similar to those of other ASCs with a theme of “pardon.” All of the other ASCs attended the event and appreciated the reconciliation made possible thanks to the efforts of this cross border initiative.

4. Results and impact of building the capacity building of youth associations to implement development projects

The program paid a lot of attention to building the capacity of the youth associations throughout the program. The sustainability of the ASCs’ microprojects depended upon the youth’s capacity to manage them. We began building the ASCs’ capacity through a series of trainings. It is for this reason that the workshops were the top priority throughout program implementation.

Taking into account the various aspects of capacity building, we offered four trainings in the following themes:

- Organizational capacity and techniques for management committees
- Capacity building techniques for millers and shop owners who manage projects in these domains
- Management and administration of an association
- Project development and entrepreneurship

a. Organizational capacity and techniques for management committees

The program placed a particular emphasis on training management committees which are a fundamental element in the sustainability of activities. The training for management committees touches upon general management themes with a particular emphasis on financial monitoring. The pedagogical approach for these workshops is always characterized by discussion sessions in small groups and in plenary that address concrete cases regarding current management practices. The role plays are systematically used as supporting activities to facilitate the comprehension of the different sessions. The five training themes were:

- The journal: Explanation of account entries and the calculations that accompanies each entry, procedures for recording transactions and the importance of monitoring the entries.
- The journal: Explanation of payments and the calculations, procedures for recording account activity and the importance of monitoring expenses.
- Monitoring stock: Definition of “stock,” recording stock transactions, the importance of monitoring stock
- Activity accounts: Identification of the benefits, identify the documents that allow one to have and manage such an account
- The committee’s work and other members of the group’s involvement: Definition of the tasks for member of the management committee, oversight techniques, explanation of the

importance of having good internal organization and good communication between the committee and the rest of the group.

At the end of the sessions, the participants made recommendations about the methods of organization, oversight systems, the importance of good organization, information to collect and the need to systematically share information with the community that elected the committee. Finally documents such as worksheets to track stocks and accounts were provided for the presidents of the committees.

b. Results and impact of the capacity building training

Thanks to the diverse training given to the microproject management committees, the millers and the shop owners, the program succeeded in helping all of the beneficiaries obtain the necessary competencies to manage their projects. The program achieved the following results in this area:

- All of the management committees received management training
- All of the management committees received internal governance training
- All of the committees are able to oversee the daily operations of their projects, record all transactions in their management notebooks, and share information with the rest of the community
- For the microprojects that needed it, the program provided training in specific technical areas to facilitate efficient program operations (using and maintaining videos and audio equipment)
- The diverse management documents for ASCs and their activities now exist and are maintained
- Projects whose implementation in the past was described as nebulous, are effectively run by the management committees
- The management committees' operations which in the past were carried out by a small minority are now transparent and monitored by all members of the board in which women are starting to play a more active role
- Information regarding project management is now shared with the entire village
- The youth are solicited by the population to propose solutions to various questions that concern the community (mediation, community improvement activities) that demonstrate confidence and respect from the population. The different trainings effectively gave associations the aptitudes to allow them to participate in such matters.
- The associations are also solicited by other villages and neighborhoods, sometimes even those in Guinea Bissau, to organize socio-cultural and recreational events.

The different evaluations showed that the management committees are effectively running the projects. The program also overcame the challenge of capacity building in relation to correct project operations. The committees are in fact practicing the elements addressed in the training which will ensure sustainability. All of the committees have been able to assure the transparent operation of their projects and continue to merit the confidence of youth which are regularly informed about project progress.

c. Capacity building for millers and shop owners

Certainly projects must be well managed in order to achieve their objectives, but good management is not the only means to this end. Running a project requires certain

qualification for each activity – people must be able to operate certain machinery for example. These qualifications therefore become the basis for training which complements that given to the management committees. The capacity building workshops addressed the following:

- Training for millers on the operation, maintenance and monitoring of a mill, the descriptions and roles of the motor and the body of the mill. The training combined theory and practice which greatly helped the apprentices learn their jobs.
- The shop owners received training on taking inventory, handling perishables and monitoring the expiration date for certain products.

d. management and administration of an association

Capacity building has several facets and the program tried to address as many of these as possible. The program trained the members of each management committee on association management which allowed them to learn about the aspect of the administrative management of an association, notably legal issues and administrative procedures. The following results were achieved from this training:

- All of the ten associations know the procedure for becoming legally recognized
- All of the associations have mastered the management tools and procedures in order to legally manage their association
- One of the most impressive results of this particular training is that many of the associations are now in the process of obtaining legal recognition. The training also encouraged the ASCs to contact other organizations such as AFDS.

e. project development and entrepreneurship

The program did not want to limit training to the aspects of daily management. We thought it would be beneficial to give the associations the capacity to explore other opportunities that often present themselves in their environment. To achieve this result, we worked with ASACASE, an organization that specializes in credit, and proposed a training module that addressed project development and entrepreneurship.

This module, which we presented in several sessions over seven days, received a very positive response from the participants. The training used a participatory approach throughout the training which included role plays and simulations to help them learn the techniques for developing programs. The approach also allowed the participants to practice different types of behavior that entrepreneurs use to develop their ideas. The training achieved the following results:

- The trainers demonstrated to participants that: no enterprise is too small for the basic management principles and every project is effectively an enterprise that must be managed with a certain mentality
- Certain training sessions that were only given to a limited number of people required restitutions so that the trained individuals could share their expertise with other members of the association

- We can count the series of project documents developed by the ASCs as a good indicator that the training content was well acquired and understood. Another measure of success is the ASC in Bouna which received funding for its project.
- The impact of the training can also be seen through the ASCs' working documents and certain practices such as opening bank accounts – an important result since at the beginning of the program only two out of the ten associations had bank accounts (Samine and Diattacounda). At the end of the program, all of the ASCs had accounts at the Credit Mutuel or in similar structures in their communities.

16. INDICATIONS, RESULTS AND IMPACT CONCERNING PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is naturally a large concern for both USAID and World Education. As a result, from the start of the program World Education made every effort to guarantee sustainability. Steps included:

- a. Increase the organizational capacity and good governance of the associations and give them the expertise to autonomously run their activities. To do this, World Education offered training in the areas of leadership, project management, association management and administration, human rights, stress management and nonviolent conflict management.
- b. Increase the capacity of World Education's partner OFAD, provide logistical support, assure that OFAD work in collaboration with World Education and the ASCs for the duration of the project, assure that OFAD monitor the ASCs and continue to do so after the end of our intervention.
- c. Involve a number of partners in the execution of program activities to avoid isolating the program from its environment. We rooted the project in the target areas and introduced it among the various actors who will continue to do the work in the future.

It is evident that the steps taken to assure sustainability were successful as there are signs of emerging partnerships. The associations established relations with other donors, for example the ASC Bouna de Kolda started a partnership with AFDS (Agence du Fonds du Développement Social which funded it to do the following activities:

- The rehabilitation of the neighborhood clinic for 8.000.000CFA when only 400.000 had been proposed. Having solicited the municipality, AFDS decided to give the ASC Bouna this amount in the form of a subgrant. The project is presently being executed. The ASC put in place a management committee, the funds were transferred to the public treasurer and the ASC started advertising for a nurse.
- The management of a construction project for a neighborhood market for 21.000.000CFA. The ASC out together a management committee of women and the area in front of the market has been given by the community.

Building the capacity of the ASC allowed them to make interesting contacts with other organizations, some of which were attracted by the performance of the ASCs who have

already successfully run projects or are initiating interesting activities. The following organizations approached the target ASCs to launch programs:

- MALAO: to develop a program to reduce weapons circulation
- The National Committee for the Fight Against AIDS (CNLS) to develop and HIV/AIDS program
- Afrique Enjeu and PROCAS: to develop a cross-border activities
- The Program for the Fight Against Poverty (PLCP): to develop a program to fight poverty

Another strong indicator that proves the chances for sustainability is that many of the projects that were initially financed by the program will generate money in the future. The following are examples of activities that have generated revenue:

- The ASC Musidal de Niagha, after a long meeting with the women who manage the mill, decided to divide the mill profits among the women to safeguard the money. The five women who received the money were in turn used for small income generating activities such as making and selling soap, selling vegetables, etc. Currently the mill funds have financed the women's microcredit in the amount of 50.000CFA with an interest rate of 5% for a duration of three months. The reimbursement rate is 98%.
- In Samine, a campaign to sell cashews allowed ACSAS to make 355.000CFA. The profits were used to build a fence around the football field with the aim that spectators would pay to watch games. This activity raised an additional 70.000CFA. The initial funds given to the ASC by the program for the cashew project was 1.006.700CFA. The association also constructed an office with the profits. More than 600 bricks have already been made and the construction is 35% complete.

World Education also understands that sustainability depends on the availability of resources. World Education therefore recognized that many of the challenges would have to be overcome by multiple actors who themselves should participate in activities and even manage them.

It is for this reason that World Education encouraged the involvement of administrative technical services and other actors in the execution of the associations' activities. Several examples of their participation are noted below:

- The police inspectors in the Bouna neighborhood of Kolda facilitated awareness raising sessions around themes such as drug use
- The Tanaff police participated in all of the activities organized by the ASC Moricounda: village clean-up, films, debates.
- The youth inspectors supervised the preparation and execution of Citizen Vacations managed by the Ministry of Youth in the villages of Saré Yoba Diéga and Diattacounda.
- Head nurses facilitated awareness raising sessions around health (HIV/AIDS, malaria) organized by the ASCs Médine El Hadji, Diattacounda, Saré Yoba, Tanaff and Simbandi Brassou
- Youth inspectors facilitated training sessions on youth association administration and the process for becoming legally recognized associations and economic interest groups.

16. LESSONS LEARNED

The Youth Program was a pilot experience to develop leadership among youth and prepare them to play a role in their communities and in the reconstruction of the Casamance. The program allowed World Education to take a number of lessons learned and light the way for other organizations to engage in similar programs in the future.

- The youth associative movement in the Casamance is characterized by a lack of information on important subjects that interest youth. Youth, as a result, are not informed on issues such as HIV/AIDS and STIs, weapons circulation, landmines, conflict prevention and management and human rights.
- The youth movement in the Casamance harbors a vast potential shown by the large mobilization and solid engagement towards work. These characteristics allow for a strong ability to help reconstruct and reenergize economic and social development in the Casamance.
- Because of their organizational weaknesses and their lack of information, the youth movement in the Casamance needs an enormous amount of training to build their capacity.
- This need, which the youth vigorously manifest makes them very attentive and receptive to training. The youth regularly attended our training sessions who made important efforts to review and apply the skills.
- The conflict's aftermath is still present and affects all levels of the population, particularly youth who are the actors (rebels and soldiers) or simply victims of the war's consequences. The conflict has caused the population to be very careful and distrustful of one another. In the villages, the stress and the trauma continues to affect the populations as well, despite the relative calm during the past year in the region. The stress and trauma are exacerbated by grudges which are sources of future intercommunity conflicts when the refugees and displaced persons return to the villages. Future programs for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Casamance must place a particular emphasis on pardon and reconciliation. The youth can, as proved in this program, play an important role in this phase of restoring social relations in the villages.
- The fundamental role that the youth must place in the reconstruction of the Casamance is to push funders and particularly USAID to put in place several youth programs. Future programs should use this USAID-funded pilot youth program to maximize youth involvement. Youth require specific approaches that these projects must create and put in place.
- Programs only dealing with youth management will not be able to effectively mobilize them because of the importance of financing microprojects, which is the solution to many of their problems and gives them an opportunity to practice the skills that they obtain from capacity building training.
- In the context of Senegalese decentralization, a program of this kind can not be as successful without the effective involvement of elected officials. If the decentralized structures are involved in the execution of the program, the chances for the success and

sustainability of program activities increase because the authorities of the decentralized structures can bring to the program their influence as presidents of the rural, regional or communal advisory committee.

- The technical services of the state, if they are conveniently involved in the program, constitute a determining factor for the success and sustainability of the program. In fact, they usually offer their competencies and ask for nothing in return, especially because the agents are often very enthusiastic to work with NGOs who reenergize them and put things into action. Effectively, in the program execution, we greatly profited from these inspectors who brought a lot to the program and who are presently engaged in supporting the sustainability of activities. The solid relations that the program helped the ASCs establish with the inspectors allowed the inspectors to integrate the ASCs into a group permanently involved at the level of the CDEPS.
- More than adults, the youth more firmly put activities in motion. The program that targeted youth must therefore involve youth in the conception of projects. We have noticed that if youth are given responsibility, they mobilize themselves to implement activities and awaken all of their dormant talents for a successful program. This vivacity does not exist among adults.
- The fact that women are marginalized is equally noted among youth but not as profoundly among other parts of the population. This problem is quickly resolved if it is addressed by the program. We also observed a quick change among young girls in accessing certain responsibilities that were formally given to young boys. This equity in a community can be improved on the basis of youth programs that easily give girls opportunities to liberate themselves.
- The vitality of youth and their propensity to take initiative should push those who lead youth programs to provide them with a good monitoring strategy, permitting youth to respect the vision of the program and not to inhibit their motivation and their capacity to innovate activities with their potential power of creativity. The idea of videoclubs and cross border dialogue came from the fertile imaginations of youth and we only had the merit to put youth in these conditions and propose activities that they thought would help them.
- The training component is fundamental in a youth program. The need is important in this part of the population that is still in a learning phase. But it is important to start the learning with training sessions on leadership. In this program, we showed that leadership training was very successful and created a consciousness and mobilization among youth who are determinants in implementing activities and assuring their sustainability.
- A youth program should also have microproject subgrants to allow youth to implement projects. If the youth's initiatives do not find funds to get them going they become frustrated and risk demobilization. A youth program in a place experiencing the aftermath of conflict like the Casamance, should be an opportunity to revitalize the youth movement and this is done through a multitude of projects that are springboards for development in a variety of sectors. This is what we intended when the program financed the commercialization of cashews to profit the ASC in Samine. During the project, the youth took this activity seriously to position themselves in the cashew market.

- It is undeniable that the limited funds for microproject subgrants was a limiting factor in the youth program. This line in the budget did not allow us to finance many projects or give substantial funds to the youth to position themselves to invest in various sectors.
- A youth program should continue for three to five years to allow an NGO enough time to roll out a strategy and implement various projects without time constraints.
- The funds for such a program should be sufficient in order to produce the real impacts in an important geographical area. The program which was a pilot, had an impact in specific villages in the Balantacounda zone. The large changes which one hopes for in such a program require a critical mass of projects to trigger these changes.
- Contrary to adult associations that are reticent to federate, the youth have a large propensity to regroup their associations into large federations. This was the case in the present program which saw the ten association federate to overcome their challenges more effectively than associations operating individually. It is important to encourage this regrouping and to give them the capacity to advocate, lobby, market, and negotiate so that they can play their representative roles and defend certain causes in the region and the country.
- All youth programs, in the context of the Casamance should focus on reconstruction and reenergizing the economy. But peace consolidation should be a priority because peace will continue to be fragile for a long time. The various program activities and program funds should effectively take into account this important priority of peace consolidation.
- In the context of peace consolidation and the role of youth, it is necessary to oversee cross border dialogue among youth in Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau. It is undeniable that peace in the Casamance must pass through the border regions where a lot of the conflict came from. The important lessons learned from the cross border dialogue throughout the program pushes us to recommend systematizing this activity in future programs. We observed that dialogue among youth is easily achieved so one must use this potential.

17. CONCLUSION

The program “Alternatives for At-Risk Youth in the Casamance” is part of the special objective that USAID put in place to specifically support the Casamance and was carried out over eight months. It was able to improve the existing conditions of Casamance youth and increase their roles in their communities.

The evaluations and the multiple observations showed that despite its brevity, the program “Alternatives for At-Risk Youth in the Casamance” achieved its principle objectives in developing youth leadership and training them to better face the spread of HIV/AIDS, drugs and conflicts and especially building their capacity to make them effective actors in all activities implemented at the community level.

But in initiating this youth program pilot, USAID had another aim which was to research how to work with youth. The youth program pilot was an occasion for USAID and World Education to try an approach and methodology with youth that certainly touched the most delicate part of the population. The question of how to work with youth is still complex here

because we are in a context of conflict and post-conflict. World Education was therefore very vigilant throughout the program to record as many lessons learned as possible in order to fulfill USAID's priority to analyze the impacts of the training and activities. The program was also a success because we were able to uncover a wide range of lessons learned which gave us pertinent indications on how to effectively work with youth in a post-conflict context.

The program taught us that the Casamance youth are characterized by a high degree of engagement and a large capacity to mobilize. But because of this conflict, youth have an immense need for training. Capacity building should be the greatest investment to valorize this target which is conscious of its weaknesses in this domain.

The program taught us that capacity building must begin with leadership training that allows youth to see the need for introspection and measuring their role in the region's reconstruction. The leadership training also gives youth the tools necessary to adopt the appropriate behavior and attitudes to face situations that they will inevitably encounter.

Capacity building spreads into other domains allowing youth to better analyze their environments and implement development and peace consolidation activities. The domains are: program management, association management and administration, human rights, stress management, and nonviolent conflict prevention and management.

The program also showed us that youth's propensity for action on one hand and their many practical needs following the crisis should push youth programs to finance projects to satisfy these preoccupations. The projects should be large enough to position youth in a particular sector, allow them to be supported by the largest number of actors possible. The success and sustainability of the projects depends in large part on the quality and quantity of this support.

We also note that the reorganization and restructure of the ASCs gave a place to women who have greatly supported the ASC. Women's involvement in the ASCs' management was not met with much resistance. In fact, the young men are often open to changes which are difficult for their adult counterparts.

The program taught us that in the context of the Casamance, a youth program must focus on reconstruction and economic revitalization. Peace consolidation must be the top priority because peace is still fragile and requires strengthening. This consolidation must take into account cross border dialogue among youth in Senegal, the Gambia and Guinea Bissau. In fact durable peace in the Casamance must come from peace in these zones. The capacity that the youth have already shown in cross border dialogues leads us to recommend this activity for future programs.

Certainly youth programs must focus on youth but must not ignore the other members of the community. To put certain operations in place, mobilizing only youth is not sufficient. The community must work together on certain activities, most notably peace activities.

Finally, "Alternatives for At-Risk Youth in the Casamance" allowed us to realize the pertinence of such a program in the context of the Casamance. The immense potential that the youth represent in the Casamance requires nothing but mobilization in order to become a strong force in peace reconstruction and consolidation. The various authorities, all development stakeholders that participated this program as well as the different parts of the population estimate that the Casamance has a great need for this kind of intervention and

count on their children to overcome the challenge of consolidating peace and reconstructing the region.

This call from the Casamance will be positively received by USAID which gathered a variety of lessons throughout a program whose impact on youth is indisputable.

ANNEXES

- 1: Workplan
- 2: ASC program activities
- 3: Table of training themes used for the program
- 4: Minutes from the creation of the Federation of Associations in Kolda
- 5: Summary table of ASCs' cross border activities
- 6: Evaluation of external stakeholders (Head of Youth Services, Kolda, Director of CDEPS, Kolda)
- 7: Summary table of villages using mills in Niagha
- 8: Inventory and division of equipment between World Education and OFAD Nafore
- 9: Letter from USAID authorizing vehicle transfer from World Education to OFAD
- 10: Minutes of the vehicle transfer, letter transferring ownership of the motorcycle from World Education to OFAD
- 11: Letters of appreciation from the Ministry of Family, Social Development and National Solidarity
- 12: Letters of appreciation from ASCs
- 13: Newspaper articles

ACRONYMS

AFDS : Agence du Fonds du Développement Social

Afrique Enjeu : Ong locale engagée dans la gestion de conflit

ASACASE : Association Sénégalaise pour l'Appui à la Création d'Activités Socioéconomiques

ASC : Association Sportive et Culturelle

CDEPS : Centre Départemental d'Education Populaire et Sportive

CNLS : Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Sida

FHI : Family Health International

MALAO : Mouvement pour la réduction de la circulation des Armes Légères en Afrique de l'Ouest

MFDC : Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance

Navétane : Tournoi hivernal de football pour les jeunes

OFAD : Organisation de Formation et d'Appui au Développement

ONG : Organisation Non Gouvernementale

PLCP : Programme de Lutte Contre la Pauvreté

PROCAS : Programme Casamance

UNICEF : Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'Enfance

USAID : Agence des Etats Unis pour le Développement